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Logo and the urban environment

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Abstract

Our study focused to understand the importance of graphic representations, as logos, in urban environment and to identify the principles of logo design used to create them. In this paper, we have discussed about logos in the historical centre of Bucharest and it was hard work, including walking by foot along the streets to identify all these logos which convey different messages to the people and to show what typology was used and what graphics were drawn. As it is known, daily, the people are assaulted by signs, symbols, colours, which are everywhere on panels, buildings, walls, cars, buses, etc. All these representations are 'expressions of something which exist in reality'. In our research study, we have tried to see in what proportion is used a logo to represent a company, a pub, a restaurant, a bank, a pet shop, a theatre, etc., and the result for this approach was so interesting.

Keywords: Logo, design, old city.

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1. Introduction

From the beginning, our intention of studying was to realise a LOGO MAP of the Old City Centre and to identify every affair according to a logo. For this purpose, we have made many 'documentary trips' along the streets of the Old City to take photos, to draw logos, to realise what kind of symbols was used to create an identity. In this area, there are concentrated many bars, pubs, restaurants, shops, banks, exchange offices, massage and entertainment cabinets, night clubs, etc. Therefore, the symbols are quite various, from a bottle of wine to a silhouette of a woman. A few days we were present in this centre and after that, we have been in our studio to process the information 'picked up' from the streets. This paper is about this work of walking, seeing, processing, translating and writing about this subject. The information was enough to write not only a paper but a few. That is why we have realised only a part of our research study in this paper.

2. Symbols used in logo design in the Old City Centre

As we have underlined earlier, this area is for entertainment and recreation especially, but there are also interesting touristic objectives to be visited: The Old Royal Palace, The Stavropoleos Church, the building of National Bank of Romania, The Manuc Inn, The Lime Trees Inn, National Museum of History. We have noticed appropriate symbols in logo design concerning the activity, as follows: barber razor, sewing machine, hat, a glass of wine or a bottle, potatoes, burger, shell, vessel, shoe, a cup of coffee/tea, guitar, saxophone, flames, bicycle, cat, man, book, etc. In this area, there are many graphic representations to define the business/restaurant/pub or bar. The principles of logo design identified: the substitution, the associative visual perception, the juxtaposition, the stylisation, the tag line association, the silhouette and the association of different fonts. We have seen many examples concerning these principles. We have presented logos using different items in Figure 1.

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Figure 1. Examples of logos using different graphic representations: (a) barber razor; (b) sewing machine; (c) potatoes; (d) book (as a suitcase of knowledge); (e) bicycle; (f) goblin; (g) glass; (h) guitar and saxophone; (i) cat; (j) a thinking man; (k) clover; (l) two stylised horses; (m) a crowned mermaid; (n) two stylised Greek dancers beside an amphora; (o) an antique vessel; (p) the letter I is replaced by a glass of wine; (r) a stylised lion (s) flames

3. Typology of logos

As it is known, there are three types: logotype (initials of the company or word/words to define the name of the organisation/company); iconic logo (very known symbols/abstract/pictorial); complex logo (symbol + initials/words). We have noticed that there were used the three types in this area called The Old City Centre. As we have seen, it was an abundance of graphic representations and different fonts have been used to create logos. It was used one colour or two colours to define the logo. The style is from handwriting to typographic. In Figure 2, we have presented in a few photos of our study along the streets to see what kind of writing was chosen. We have noticed even initials for a business which is a well-known brand (KFC), a special style of writing for GYROS and KOTON.

Figure 2. A few examples of writing

As we have already told, there were logotypes using two colours and possible different fonts to describe the logo. And, of course, a writing using a special letter X to realise the EXCLUSIVE logo. In Figure 3, we have represented only the SUBWAY logo (in two colours), Old Habits (different fonts and colours are used) and the Exclusive. In the Old Town, there are more logos using different fonts and colours, but we have represented in the paper only a small part of our research. An interesting logo is TRUE (Figure 3e) which has used two colours and as drawings, a half of a guitar and the letter t as a stand. The juxtaposition principle is represented (Figure 3f) by using the name Escape written in red

colour. The example of Figure 3g is about a medical clinic (again two colours). The substitution principle is in Figure 3d.

a.   b.   c.   d.

Figure 3. Logos in the Old City Centre. (a) Subway logo; (b) Old Habits logo; (c) Exclusive logo; (d) Japanos logo; (e) True logo; (f) Escape logo for a night club; (g) Medicare logo; (h) Gregory`s logo

4. The map of logos in the Old City Centre

Our research study was focused on two directions, as follows: the first one, to identify the logos in the Old City Centre and to create a database of symbols, colours and other graphic representations concerning the structure of them; and, the second one, to realise a map of logos in this area. For the first direction, we have worked hard to select, to define all the logos and to identify the logo design principles applied in the creation process. After this research, we have started to include logos in a map of the Old City Centre. In this paper, we have presented only the Lipscani street, as an example (one from 25 streets of the research area), full of logos to be easy identified by the people (Figure 5). Figure 4 is presented the existing map without logos.

Figure 4. The map of the Old City Centre (without logos)

The map presented in Figure 4 presents only the streets and the historical points to be visited by tourists. There are no logos or other graphic representations concerning the entertainment like pubs, restaurants, etc. In accordance with our study, we have realised a map full of logos as identity symbols for the locations in the Old City Centre. The result was so interesting because we have seen a wonderful map full of signs, symbols and colours. For each street, we have chosen a special colour to be quickly identified. We have realised two maps, one without a legend of logos and the other one with this legend. Because we have noticed that many logos did not express what is about the business. As we have already told, this paper is only a 'piece of our work' because this research study has much more pages. But, the example (Figure 7) shows how many logos can be seen on a street. And these are not all the existing logos along Lipscani street. In few words, we have presented logos on the both sides of the Lipscani street, as follows: on the right side (selection—Figure 5): Transylvania Bank, Marelbo (shoes store), Starbucks, La Mama (Romanian traditional restaurant), Hanul cu Tei (Lime Trees Inn), Carturesti Bookstore, Jack`s Pub, Koton (textiles store), Gregory`s (Coffee & Greek Deli), NBR (National Bank of Romania), Saray (Turkish restaurant) and Sindbad (Lebanese restaurant).

On the left side (selection—Figure 6): Raiffeisen Bank, ARCUB (City Centre for Cultural Projects), THE ACE (pub), Penti (textiles), Kalapod (shoes store), Garanti Bank, CATO (textiles store), Old Habits (pub), Diverta (Bookshop), Beluga (pub), NBR (National Bank of Romania) and First Bank.

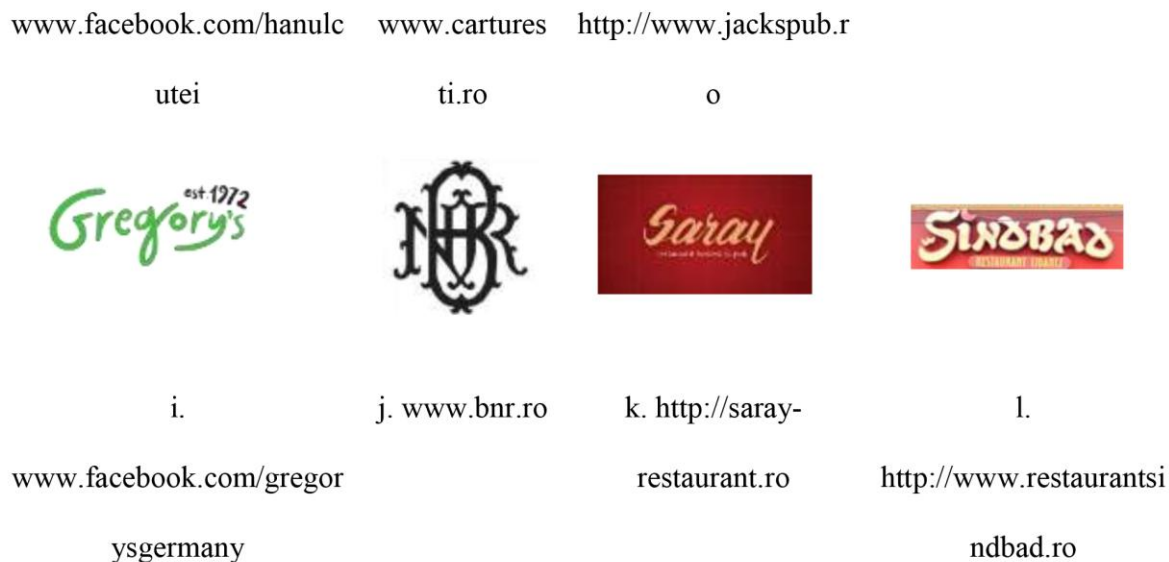**Figure 5. Logos on the right side of Lipscani street**

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www.facebook.com/gregor   restaurant.ro   http://www.restaurantsi

ysgermany   ndbad.ro

Figure 5. Logos on the right side of Lipscani street

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Figure 6. Logos on the left side of Lipscani street

Figure 7. Lipscani street map with logos

5. Conclusion

The goal of our research study was focused to see the connection between logos and environment. And we have noticed that on a small area (The Old City Centre) were represented hundreds of graphic representations. Some of them, very clear as drawings, other not. Also, we have identified a few logo design principles which were applied to create logos. It was an 'interesting graphic adventure' to walk in the streets and 'to catch' the representative element. Due to this work for our documentation, we have managed to create a database of logos in this research area. It was interesting to find characteristic drawings for logos and it was a challenge to study them. In the Lipscani street were more logos than in Figure 7, but we have made a selection to make a clear presentation in the paper. We have managed to accomplish the two proposed directions of study. But we think that is a beginning of a continuous study concerning the graphic representations in our lovely town, Bucharest.

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